DDB-2680-108-80

194

DSI-80-C-000208
SS: DSI-79-C-000749

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY (MIS) VOLUME VIII LATIN AMERICA (U)

SEPTEMBER 1980

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: *Oct 17, 2018*

~~NOFORN~~
~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY (MIS), VOLUME VIII
LATIN AMERICA (U)

DDB-2680-108-80

Information Cutoff Date: 1 April 1980

This publication supersedes
MIS-Volume VIII, November 1979,
(DDB-2680-108A-79)

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: *Oct 17, 2018*

This is a Department of Defense Intelligence Document
prepared by the Western Division,
Directorate for Research,
Defense Intelligence Agency

CLASSIFIED BY MULTIPLE SOURCES
DECLASSIFY ON
REVIEW ON 1 APRIL 2000

~~NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS~~

~~SECRET~~

PREFACE

~~(C)~~ The Military Intelligence Summary (MIS), published in eight volumes, is a synopsis of military intelligence worldwide. Intended to serve as a ready reference, the MIS presents a compilation of intelligence on those forces which contribute to the military security of each country, and on the political and economic factors affecting the country's military capability. Published semiannually, the MIS serves to update information in other DIA publications.

(U) Unless otherwise indicated, the information in volumes IV and VIII is that available in DIA as of 1 April and 1 October. The data cutoff date for the other volumes is 1 January and 1 July.

(U) Information summarized in the MIS is available in detail in numerous DIA publications. A list of related publications, both completed and scheduled, is published in the Register of Intelligence Publications (DDS-2600-37-79) and the Defense Intelligence Production Schedule (DDM-2600-35A-79). The Intelligence Users Guide (DDP-2600-397-79) explains how to obtain finished intelligence products and services from DIA.

(U) Questions and comments concerning this publication should be referred in writing to the Defense Intelligence Agency (ATTN: DB-3E), Washington, D.C. 20301. Requests for additional copies should be forwarded through command approval channels, as appropriate, to DIA (ATTN: RTS-2A), using DD Form 1142, Interagency Document Request, in accordance with DIA Manual 59-3, DIA Reference Library.

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: *Oct 17, 2018*

~~SECRET~~

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ORIENTATION MAP

ARGENTINA
BOLIVIA
BRAZIL
CHILE
COLOMBIA
CUBA
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
ECUADOR
EL SALVADOR
GUATEMALA
GUYANA
HAITI
HONDURAS
JAMAICA
MEXICO
NICARAGUA
PANAMA
PARAGUAY
PERU
URUGUAY
VENEZUELA

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: *Oct 17, 2018*

(Reverse Blank)

~~SECRET~~

(This page is UNCLASSIFIED)

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

GUATEMALA

1. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ Political-Military Situation: Guatemala is a republic with a popularly elected President and legislature. The military is a pervasive part of the system of government, both national and local. The current level of military influence is considered high and is expected to continue at this level for the foreseeable future. The current President, Major General Fernando Romeo Lucas Garcia, was inaugurated on 1 July 1978 for a 4-year term. The two retired military officers who opposed him in the election appear to have stepped down from the political scene, thereby removing a potential cause of factionalism in the military officer corps and facilitating loyalty to Lucas among military officers.

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ President Lucas' record to date has not been impressive. His administration has made few policy innovations, and much of its energy appears to have been spent in bureaucratic jockeying. Its performance thus far places it well within the conservative mold of its predecessor. Lucas himself has not shown forceful leadership, and the level of competence of his Cabinet appears weak.

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ Early in its term the Lucas government served notice that it would not tolerate demonstrations lacking prior authorization. This set the stage for clashes with labor and other leftist opposition organizations that had grown bold during the more permissive years of ex-President Laugerud. An October 1978 incident exposed the urban problem. Beginning as a protest over announcements of a 5-cent increase in bus fare (from 5 to 10 cents), the event soon was followed by widespread strikes and labor unrest. The protest, fueled at times by leftist students and political and union groups, degenerated into rioting. Lucas finally reacted to heavy criticism from various sectors, which had backed his campaign, by ordering the police to move with firmness against strikers and protestors to bring the 9 days of violence under control. Had the disorders continued, they would have posed a serious threat to the Lucas government's continuance in power. The military stood back and allowed Lucas to deal with the problem using the National Police. The rioting was curbed, but bus fare has remained at 5 cents.

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ Human rights continue to suffer from the Government's inability to deal effectively with high levels of violence. During the period Lucas has been in office, there have been reports of a revival of an anticriminal "death squad." Some of the recent murders and mysterious disappearances have been attributed to such a group, possibly acting behind the facade of a "secret anti-Communist army." Violent acts against political and labor personalitites have increased since the October 1978 crisis. Government actions in dealing with that issue resulted in the dismantling of most public sector labor groups. Attention now seems to focus on private sector labor groups, with violence directed at union leaders.

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

GUATEMALA

~~(C)~~ During 1979 and continuing into 1980 the extreme left, particularly the EGP (Guerrilla Army of the Poor), increased terrorist activities in both urban and rural areas. Success of the Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua and progress of the subversive campaign in El Salvador seem to have emboldened Guatemalan insurgents to step up their activity (bombings, kidnappings, assassinations and attempted assassinations of military and government officials, and armed actions against the Army) while at the same time causing intense alarm among the extreme right. Consequently, the Government is experiencing growing pressures from both extremes. Thus far it has resisted overreaction, relying on police forces to cope with the situation. Military forces operating in the heavily Indian-populated Quiche Department have experienced several clashes with armed EGP groups. As their casualties grow and terrorist activities intensify, internal military sentiment mounts to take more aggressive actions. The need of the Government to withstand increasing pressures from the extreme right, keep the Armed Forces under control, and yet deal effectively with the extreme left and internal social imbalances offers a severe challenge for the Lucas administration. To a large extent, Government success in dealing with challenges will depend upon the success of the junta government in El Salvador, which probably would weaken the spirit of Guatemalan subversives and relieve some of the pressure from the military and extreme right.

~~(C)~~ Other issues the Lucas government must address are inflationary pressures on the poor (12-20 percent per year for the past 5 years) and growing labor militancy demanding increased wages/benefits and improved working conditions.

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ In the area of political rights, the first new political parties in 10 years have been certified during the first year of Lucas' administration. A total of 14 new parties had filed applications, and as of March 1980, 4 had been certified, including 1 leftist party, the FUR (Frente de Unidad Revolucionario--United Revolutionary Front). The leader of this party and former Mayor of Guatemala City, Maneul Colom Argueta, was murdered in March 1979, several days after his party attained certification. This and the murder of Social Democrat leader and former Foreign Minister, Alberto Fuentes Mohr, 2 months earlier, are setbacks to the movement to open the political doors for wider choices and more open elections. Army Chief of Staff, Major General David Cancinos Barrios, who was scheduled to be elevated to the position of Minister of Defense on 1 July 1979, and considered by many as President Lucas' choice as successor to the Presidency, was assassinated on 10 June 1979.

~~(C)~~ The mid-1976 resurgence of extreme left terrorist activities has increased in intensity. The EGP (possibly in alliance with the dissident wing of the Guatemalan Communist Party) has been the most active group. A new group surfaced during 1979 known as "ORPA" (Organization Revolucionario Del Pueblo En Armas--Revolutionary Organization of

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

the People in Arms). Thus far, ORPA activities have been mostly in the agricultural south coast region, consisting of propaganda activities and harassing actions against farms. The recent increase in terrorist actions on a broad front suggests the extremist movement is becoming more cohesive. Objectives appear to be aimed at discrediting the Government, provoking Government repressive actions, making the military appear weak, creating alarm among the private sector, and agitating labor disputes (the later two to disrupt the economy).

~~(C)~~ The Army continues to maintain a two battalion force in northern Quiche Department for counterinsurgency operations and to provide security and support for newly established agricultural cooperatives in the region. There have been several clashes with armed and uniformed EGP insurgents resulting in casualties on both sides, with the Army's toll being the highest. The Indian population of the region has been increasingly vocal, claiming repressive acts by the Army and Government neglect. The Government, with military participation, has prepared an extensive plan it hopes to initiate this year to improve conditions for the Indian population of the region.

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ A major item of Guatemalan national preoccupation is the future status of neighboring Belize (formerly British Honduras), a United Kingdom dependency. Guatemala claims sovereignty over Belize based on territorial exploration by Christopher Columbus and on Spanish colonial government jurisdiction. UK claims are based on the establishment of a colony in 1638 by shipwrecked British sailors. The British would like to grant independence to Belize but fear that if they did, Guatemala would invade Belize and annex the territory. On the other hand, the reelection of Prime Minister Price of Belize increases the possibility for unilateral independence. The Guatemalan Government conceives such a move, especially considering the withdrawal of British military forces, as a possibility for Cuban alliance, leading to exploitation by infiltration of people and supplies into Guatemala.

(~~C/NOFORN~~) Relations with the UK have been sporadically tense for many years. In June 1977, certain inflammatory statements by Guatemalan officials, coupled with Guatemala's expressions of anger caused by Barbados' seizure of a shipment of 5.56-mm ammunition destined for Guatemala, resulted in the British making a large increase in the Belize garrison. Guatemala responded by making preparations for a conflict. In early July 1977, the situation was very tense, but a productive round of negotiations managed to relax tensions. It appears that Guatemala would accept, in principle, the existence of an independent Belize, provided Guatemala were ceded some territory. Statements have been made by several Guatemalan Government officials since early in 1978 that would indicate a relatively small cession of land in southern Belize would be acceptable to Guatemala. The Lucas administration's stance on the issue is similar to that of the Laugerud government's--recognition that total

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

recovery of Belize is impossible and willingness to settle for a small territorial concession. Nevertheless, the Lucas government does not seem to be anxious to sacrifice the country's historical claim just to put the issue to rest. The future of negotiations is uncertain, but indications are that the Guatemalan Government senses it has more to gain by employing the tactic of delay than displaying an active interest in resolving the issue.

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ Traditionally, good feelings toward the United States soured among the military in 1975 when the US did not sell C-47 aircraft to Guatemala. Relations worsened in March when it became known that the US Secretary of State's report to the US Congress on human rights criticized Guatemala for past abuses. Considering this to be strictly an internal affairs issue, the Guatemalan Government responded by rejecting all US military aid and all sales of military equipment that are conditional on the issue of human rights. Late in 1977, the Guatemalan Government attempted to purchase F-5 aircraft from the US. After some delay, the request was denied. In late 1978, Guatemala expressed an interest in purchasing T-34 aircraft from the US to support the Air Force pilot training program that began in February 1979. They were provided with pricing data but chose to purchase a similar aircraft (Pilatus PC-7) from Switzerland. Aware of US arms transfer policy and reluctance to lose face by a turndown on requests to purchase major items through Foreign Military Sales (FMS), Guatemala has turned to other suppliers. Despite this, they are keenly interested in acquiring F-5 interceptor aircraft, UH-1H helicopters, C-130 aircraft, and naval patrol boats from the US. It is doubtful that formal requests will be initiated for FMS purchase of any of these items until a signal is received revealing a change in US arms transfer policy. In recent years, non-US suppliers have sold Guatemala more than $31 million of military equipment.

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ Toward the end of the Laugerud administration, Guatemala requested to resume participation in the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. This request was received too late for consideration in the FY 79 IMET program but was included in FY 80 legislation for the amount of $250,000. In late March 1979, the Guatemalan Government was informed through the local press that the House of Representatives had deleted Guatemala from IMET because of its human rights record under the Lucas administration. This drew strong reactions from Guatemalan Government officials, including suggestions that the US Military Group might be asked to leave the country.

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ Another preoccupation is fear that the Cuban-supported Sandinista success in Nicaragua and the potentially explosive situation in El Salvador will lead to intensified internal security problems for Guatemala. President Lucas has met with the Presidents of El Salvador and Honduras to discuss the situation and has decided to provide economic aid in an effort to help rebuild Nicaragua's local businesses and middle class. It is hoped that these sectors will have a moderating effect on

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

the direction of the Sandinista government, thus minimizing the international ramifications of the Nicaraguan revolutionary zeal. The situation in El Salvador is more complex. The Guatemalans are willing to support any anti-Communist regime. However, the current El Salvadoran regime is perceived as being beyond help, and the Guatemalans are unsure exactly how to help prevent leftist elements from seizing control.

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ Guatemala's Armed Forces are capable of defending the country against invasion by any of its Central American neighbors. They could conduct successful small-scale operations against El Salvador, Honduras, or--provided British elements were not present--Belize. The Guatemalan Army appears to be making a concerted effort to replace much of its obsolete equipment with new arms, purchased mainly from Belgium, Israel, Portugal, South Korea, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, and Taiwan. This seems to be part of a program to update its forces; to be armed as well as, if not better than, its Central American neighbors; and to be prepared for action, if necessary, to cope with the internal security threat of extreme left insurgency.

~~(C/NOFORN)~~ The Guatemalan Armed Forces are weakened by a topheavy senior officer corps, absence of a career program for NCOs, and much obsolete equipment. Traditionally dependent upon the US for arms, Guatemala has been seeking new sources. Thus far, major items purchased from non-US sources are Galil rifles, RBY armored cars, field kitchens--all from Israel; 5.56-mm ammunition from Portugal, South Korea, Belgium, and Israel; and Pilatus PC-7 aircraft from Switzerland. They currently are interested in acquiring 105-mm howitzers, air defense artillery, mortars, armored cars, naval patrol craft, transport aircraft, and fighter/interceptor aircraft. Interest in acquiring new equipment is not so much to improve capability for actions against Belize as to update Guatemala's military force.

~~(C)~~ The Armed Forces are experiencing a shortage of junior grade officers. The Escuela Politecnica (Guatemalan Military Academy), despite the change in 1979 from an eight- to seven-semester curriculum, has not been producing sufficient graduates to satisfy junior officer requirements. To overcome the shortage, the following actions have been taken:

-- The military law was changed in January 1980 to permit reserve officers to attain the grade of lieutenant colonel. Previously, captain was the highest grade authorized for a reserve officer. This change is seen as an inducement for reserve commissioned graduates of Adolfo V. Hall schools to opt for active duty. Guatemala has five of these 4-year military secondary schools, which are administered jointly by the Ministries of Education and Defense. Previously very few graduates came on active duty.

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

GUATEMALA

-- In January 1980, concurrent with the change in the Army law, directors of A. V. Hall schools were directed to contact recent graduates and recruit them for active duty. Sixty volunteered. A special 10-month course was established at the Center for Military Studies (CEM) to enhance their general military knowledge, with emphasis on staff functions and small-unit tactics.

~~(C)~~ The Armed Forces of Guatemala have no special forces-type units as such. The closest to such a unit is a parachute battalion. The Armed Forces operate a kaibil (ranger) training center at La Polvora in the Peten region of the country. Each infantry battalion has a platoon of kaibils, which may be deployed as a separate small unit. They are used as cadre for training other conscripts in insurgency and counterinsurgency techniques and tactics. The Air Force sends personnel to the kaibil school for survival training.

2. (U) Key Officials:
President: Maj Gen Fernando Romeo Lucas Garcia, Army
Minister of Foreign Relations: Rafael Castillo Valdez
Minister of National Defense: Brig Gen Angel Anibal Guevara Rodriguez, Army
Army: Chief of Staff, Brig Gen Luis Rene Mendoza Palomo
Navy: Commander, Col Mario Enrique Paiz Balanos
Air Force: Commander, Col Carlos A. Morales Villatoro
National Police: Director General, Col German Chupina Barahona

3. ~~(C)~~ Military Budget: $74,700,000 for fiscal year ending 31 December 1980; 5.8 percent of the central government budget and 0.8 percent of estimated GNP. No service allocation is available. Dollar value converted from quetzales at the exchange rate of one quetzal equals US $1.00.

4. (U) Population: 6,817,000 as of 1 July 1979
Males (ages 15-49): 1,574,000; physically fit, 1,025,000; 74,000 reach military age (18) annually
Ethnic Divisions: 41.4 percent Indian, 58.5 percent Ladino*
Literacy: About 30 percent

5. ~~(C)~~ Army:
Personnel Strength: 14,000 (1,100 officers, 1,730 NCOs, 7,760 privates, 2,840 specialists, and 570 students and cadets).
Reserve: 35,000 semitrained.
Major Units: 5 brigades (1 infantry battalion each), 11 separate battalions (4 infantry, 1 airborne infantry, 1 military police, 1 engineer, 2 training, 1 transportation, and 1 Presidential Guard Battalion). In addition, a 400-man tactical group is stationed at La Aurora Airbase for airport security.

---

*(U) Westernized Indian, Mestizo, and white.

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

Major Equipment: 14 105-mm howitzers, 12 75-mm pack howitzers, 12 106.7-mm (4.2-inch) mortars, 5 M113 and 5 M113A1 armored personnel carriers, 10 RBY Mk. 1 armored personnel carriers (Israel), 15 M8 armored cars, and 7 Cadillac Gage V-100 armored cars. In addition, there are items in the inventory that are of questionable combat effectiveness because of age, including four M3A1 armored cars of World War II vintage and seven World War II M3 light tanks considered so obsolete as to be useless. The Army currently is working on the M8 armored cars, including installing new engines to make them more effective. It is believed that 105-mm howitzers have been acquired from Yugoslavia to replace the unsupportable 75-mm pack howitzer. Two of these howitzers have been in-country for more than a year, and recent use of the Yugoslav howitzers for determining ammunition purchase selection indicates that the howitzer has been purchased.

6. ~~(C)~~ Navy:

Personnel Strength: 535 (40 general service officers, 5 Marine officers, 205 general service enlisted, and 285 enlisted Marines).

Reserve: None.

Ships: 1 fast patrol craft (PCF) (32-meter), 10 patrol boats (PB) (2 25.9-meter, 5 19.8-meter, 1 19.2-meter, 2 12.2-meter), 2 river/roadstead patrol boats (PBR) (11-meter), 1 medium landing craft (LCM), 1 miscellaneous auxiliary (AG).

Units: The Navy is a small patrol force, with two naval bases (one on the Caribbean and one on the Pacific coast) and one Marine Company. Authority has been granted to establish a second company of Marines. Two platoons of the new company have been formed and along with the fifth platoon of the first company are assigned to Navy Base Pacific. The purpose of forming the second company is to give the Commander, Navy Base Pacific, an improved capability to control a geographic land area for which he is responsible and to provide security during the construction of new port facilities at San Jose. The four platoons of the first company are located at Navy Headquarters, Puerto Santo Tomas de Castilla, on the Caribbean.

7. ~~(C)~~ Air Force:

Personnel Strength: 470 (65 officers, 405 enlisted), including 60 pilots.

Reserve: None.

Units: Four squadrons (one fighter, one transport, one helicopter, and one maintenance).

Aircraft: 66 total: 12 jets (10 A-37B fighters, 2 AT-33 trainers); 16 turboprops (trainers--6 Pilatus PC-7s*; transports--9 Aravas,

---

* ~~(C)~~ Six additional Pilatus PC-7 aircraft have been purchased from the Swiss, to be delivered in 1980. The Guatemalan Air Force also apparently has decided to modify the aircraft for armament delivery. An armament delivery demonstration in February 1980 revealed employment of rockets and 250-pound bombs.

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 17, 2018

GUATEMALA

1 C-12 Super King Air); 25 prop (12 transports--1 DC-6B, 11 C-47s; 4 utility--3 Cessna 206s, 1 Cessna 180; 9 trainers--9 Cessna 172s); 13 helicopters (utility--7 UH-1Hs, 3 Alouette IIIs, 2 Lamas, 1 Bell Jet Ranger.**)

8. ~~(C)~~ Paramilitary:
None. (The Civil Police consist of two distinct forces, both subordinate to the Minister of Government).
Personnel Strength: National Police - 5,570; Treasury Police - 1,058.

9. (U) Key US Officials (all in Guatemala City except as indicated):
Chief of Mission: Ambassador Frank V. Ortiz, Jr.
Deputy Chief of Mission: Melvin E. Sinn
Chief, AID Mission: Eliseo Carrasco
Defense Attaché and Army Attaché: Col Edward N. Fletcher
Naval Attaché (Mexico City): Capt Thomas M. Murdoch
Air Attaché (Tegucigalpa): Col William E. Miller
Military Group Commander and Chief Army Section: Col Donald R. Ley
Chief, Air Force Section: Lt Col Nicholas A. Schillen, Jr.
Joint Logistics Officer: Maj Michael L. Brown

10. ~~(C)~~ Foreign Military Presence:
Israeli Military Advisers: two (one pilot and one maintenance representative assisting the Guatemalan Air Force with operations and maintenance of Arava aircraft).
Swiss Military Advisers: one (Swiss Air Force pilot working with the Guatemalan Air Force on operations and maintenance of the Pilatus PC-7 aircraft).

** ~~(C)~~ Three Bell Jet Ranger helicopters have been purchased for use in training aviation cadets at the pilot training school. One Jet Ranger was delivered in mid-February 1980, and the other two are scheduled to arrive in March.